

## The Army of the South-West, and the First Campaign in Arkansas. Chapter Ninth & Tenth

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## THE ARMY OF THE SOUTH-WEST, AND THE FIRST CAMPAIGN IN ARKANSAS.

BY SAM'L PRENTIS CURTIS,

BREVET CAPTAIN AND AID-DE-CAMP TO MAJOR GENERAL CURTIS.

### CHAPTER NINTH.

#### REPORTS OF REGIMENTAL AND OTHER OFFICERS.

(Continued from page 12.)

COLER—25TH INFANTRY ILLINOIS VOLUNTEERS.

HEADQUARTERS 25TH REGIMENT ILLINOIS VOLUNTEERS, }  
CAMP NEAR PEA RIDGE, BENTON CO., ARK., March 9th, 1862. }

GENERAL—At 2 o'clock on the morning of the 6th inst., six companies of the 25th Regiment of Illinois Volunteers marched with the main body of the 1st and 2d Divisions from camp near Bentonville to Sugar Creek Hollow. Scarcely had we reached the latter place, a distance of sixteen miles, when we received a dispatch saying that General Sigel, with our rear guard, was surrounded and engaged by a vastly superior force of the enemy; that unless reinforced quickly he would certainly be cut off and defeated. Without waiting for further orders, I ordered an about face and retraced our steps on a double-quick a distance of about five miles, when we met the brave Sigel, who had most gallantly cut his way through the enemy's line.

Here the four companies which had been detached on the day previous to take possession of some flouring mills, rejoined the regiment. Night approaching, and the enemy not appearing in any considerable force, I was ordered to return and take position on the heights overlooking the valley of Sugar Creek, put out pickets, and rest upon our arms and await further orders.

The morning of the 7th came, and with it the intelligence that the enemy, in full force, had succeeded in gaining our rear, and were drawn up in line of battle. Soon was heard the booming of cannon, announcing that the batteries of both armies were engaged.

Every officer and man stood in his place in the ranks, and awaited impatiently, anxiously expecting every moment to be ordered forward to take part in the

deadly strife. Thus we stood until 4 o'clock P. M., under the most painful suspense, all confident of victory, but fearful we would not be allowed to take a part in achieving it. A stern joy was felt when General Sigel rode up in person and ordered the regiment, together with the 44th Illinois Volunteers, to move forward to the support of the left wing of our line of battle.

On our arrival at the scene of action, it was ascertained that the enemy had retired, leaving that part of the field to our troops.

At this time heavy firing was heard far to our right, where a doubtful contest seemed to be raging between the troops under command of Col. Carr and those composing the left wing of the enemy's line.

General Sigel being called upon for help, I, by his order, dispatched the five companies comprising the left wing of the regiment to reinforce Col. Carr, while the right wing moved forward in the line of battle, supporting two pieces of artillery. After moving forward from one thousand to fifteen hundred yards, without meeting the enemy, it became apparent that for the time he declined further battle.

As darkness gathered over the field of blood, our moving columns were brought to a halt, to lay down and rest upon their arms, and the firing ceased throughout the entire length of the lines, not to be renewed until the coming day.

Early on the morning of the 8th, the two wings of the regiment were again united, and I was ordered to take a position in an open field, under cover of a fence and a log barn, about one hundred yards in front of Welfley's Battery, and not over nine hundred yards from the batteries of the enemy. This position was gained in excellent order, although to reach it we were compelled to pass through a shower of shot and shell, over an open field, in full view of the enemy's batteries.

Arrived in position, I ordered the men to drop flat upon the ground, in which manner they remained for one hour and thirty minutes, exposed to a terrible fire from the enemy's guns, aimed principally at our batteries on the rising ground in our rear, which were returning the fire with deadly precision.

As the fire from the enemy's battery began to slacken, the able and ever-ready tactician, General Sigel, ordered the batteries to advance, and at the same time ordered me to proceed, under cover of a thick underwood, to a point within four hundred yards of the enemy's line, my left flank opposite the left of the enemy's batteries, and resting upon the Cassville and Fayetteville road.

I approached this new position unobserved, moving at a double quick over the open ground, but at a slow and cautious step through the underbrush, keeping well covered so as not to attract the attention of the enemy's batteries.

In our front was an open field about four hundred yards across, immediately beyond which was woodland covered with trees, logs, and an uncommonly thick growth of oak underbrush, from which the leaves had not yet fallen. Here the enemy was posted in strong force a few rods from the fence, so as not to attract the fire of our batteries.

By this time several regiments on my left were closely engaging the enemy. The thunders of the artillery and the incessant volley of musketry, from both our own and the enemy's lines, argued to me that victory was trembling in the balance.

At this seemingly critical moment, Gen. Curtis rode up and ordered me to gain the fence on the opposite side of the field, and at the same time ordered forward the several regiments on my right.

We dashed across the field and reached the fence in good order before the enemy could bring his pieces to bear on our lines. When I reached the fence, I found that the ever gallant 12th Missouri Volunteers were close upon my left, but that I was without immediate support on my right. I halted for a moment, and sent forward a few resolute skirmishers to find the precise position of the foe. They soon returned, and reported them in large force about seventy-five yards distant. During this short interval of time, the men disencumbered themselves of blankets and knapsacks, saying they would conquer or never leave the brush.

My right being now supported, I ordered a movement forward into the brush. We had not advanced over fifty yards when a loud clear voice was heard to cry out, "Ready!" I instantly gave the command, "Cover."

The men had scarcely dropped upon the ground, when the enemy from his coverts let loose a terrific volley of musketry, which was promptly returned by our ranks with deadly effect.

At the same time Welfley's battery belched forth death into their thinning ranks, yet the greater number stood their ground, and fought bravely until about the sixth round, when they all gave way in the wildest disorder.

After giving them a few parting rounds to increase the velocity of their speed, I ordered the fire to cease. "The victory was with the Stars and Stripes."

The regiment entered the action four hundred strong; early on the morning of the 8th, company "A" in command of Lieut. Mitchell, was detached to support two pieces of Capt. Welfley's battery, a duty which he gallantly performed.

I am proud to report that in every position in which they were placed, officers and men showed the coolest courage and most determined bravery. They obeyed every order, and performed their duty well.

Where all done so well, it would be invidious to make distinctions; but I cannot close this report without making mention of the gallant conduct of 1st Lieut. John F. Ison, of company G, who by the bursting of shell received a severe and painful wound in the hand and was otherwise injured, yet he refused to leave the field, and remained in command of his company until the close of the action.

The following officers took part in the action: Maj. R. H. Nodine, Adj. Geo. W. Flynn, Capts. Clark, Boyden, Wall, Tuggart, Osborne, Summers, and Andrews; 2d Lieuts. Mitchell, Lake, Braselton, Vandever, Knapp, and Richards.

I append a list of our killed, wounded, and missing.

I have the honor to be, my dear General, your obedient servant,

W. N. COLER, Col. 25th Reg't Ill's Vol's Comm'g.

GEN. P. J. OSTERHAUS, Commanding First Division.

CAMP NEAR LEESBURG [TOWN], }  
March 10th, 1862. }

COL. COLER, Comm'd'g 25th Ill's Vol's :

After receiving your order to reinforce Col. Carr on the afternoon of the 7th March, I proceeded with the left wing of the regiment to a point opposite the enemy's center, where I took a position in a small piece of brush. Gen. Curtis ✓

soon after ordered me to move across the meadow and to charge the enemy, and if possible to drive him from his position. In pursuance with this order, we advanced across the field and penetrated the brush on the opposite side about three hundred yards, when some scattering shots were fired from the rear of our left. Supposing them to be from some of our own men who had got behind their company, I ordered them to stop. I halted the command, and moved towards the left wing to ascertain the cause of the firing, when a prisoner was brought to me, who was sent to ascertain who we were by the commander of the enemy's force at that point, and who informed me that the 7th Louisiana regiment and two others were lying to our left about forty yards. Owing to the darkness and thickness of the underbrush, I found it impossible to distinguish friend from foe, and also from the fact that one of our own batteries was playing upon us from the angle of the brush and the road, I thought it best to retire, which I did, recrossing the meadow and taking position in the brush about four hundred yards from the enemy, where we lay on our arms all night, at the request of Col. Carr. In the morning we rejoined our command.

Very truly, your obedient servant,

R. H. NODINE, Maj. 25th Ills. Vols.

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WANGELIN—12th INFANTRY MISSOURI VOLS.

CAMP "ROSE HILL BATTLEFIELD."

COLONEL: In accordance with your instructions just received, I do hereby submit my report of the movements and actions of the 12th Missouri Volunteers, on the days of battle, March 6th, 7th, and 8th, 1862:

Arriving in Bentonville March 6th, at about 10 o'clock A. M., I was ordered by you to remain in town until receiving further orders. The regiment had their arms stacked in front of a large unfinished frame church. The 2d regiment Missouri Volunteers marched from the south into our road, and followed the main army of which the 12th Missouri formed the rear. In the rear of the 2d Missouri, and apparently from the same direction, appeared a large body of troops, who after a short time were discovered to be the enemy; how strong, I am not able to say. The effective strength of the 12th at that day was only some 325 men, as two companies had been ordered off several days previous. The enemy, outnumbering us and the other troops in town greatly, spread out his men on both sides with the road, and parallel with it, in order to intercept all egress. I was then ordered by Gen. Sigel to march in the rear of a company of flying artillery, on the same road as our whole army had taken. Shortly after, however, the whole regiment was ordered forward, with the exception of one company, who remained as protection behind the artillery almost the whole day. We had hardly left town when it was taken possession of by the enemy. Gen. Sigel ordered the 12th, the only infantry present, to throw out skirmishers on both sides of the road, and to march the balance of the regiment on both sides of the artillery by the flank, fronting outward. This way we marched, without any molestation, for several miles, when we were suddenly attacked by a large body of cavalry, who were, after an engagement which to me seemed to last about a quarter of an hour, driven from the field, leaving many of their dead and wounded

on the field. This was the first time the men stood in fire; but all, without exception, behaved gallantly, pouring in their shot with deliberation and coolness. The enemy, so severely repulsed, withdrew, and we marched forward on our road without any further molestation.

The casualties of the day were three wounded. One ambulance with the driver was taken, with some sick soldiers of some other regiment. We marched on, and meeting you after a few hours' further march, went into camp.

*March 7, 1862.*—This morning the regiment was ordered to follow in its march, the 36th Illinois Volunteers, and finally after an hour's march deployed in a large field, protecting Capt. Hoffman's battery. After a while two companies were ordered to deploy as skirmishers towards the woods, about one-fourth of a mile in front of us, to protect some horses and drivers who were sent to recover a cannon which had been lost in a previous engagement of the day, which order was executed in gallant style; the gun was recovered and brought back. We were then several times ordered to change our position, when finally, while the regiment was marching into the timber by the right flank, and was about half in the thicket, a large body of the enemy's infantry appeared, which was soon engaged by the regiment's left wing, and after considerable execution driven back. This ended the second day's engagement as far as this regiment is concerned. After some marching without coming to any other general engagement, we, in company of several other regiments, encamped in a large corn-field, without fire or food. The casualties of the day were twelve wounded, some of whom severely.

It is with great satisfaction that I can bear testimony to the coolness and bravery of all the officers and men under my command during the whole day. The comparatively small loss I attribute solely to their firmness, which enabled them to drive the enemy off with great loss, without being subject themselves to a very protracted fire.

The third day, March 8th, commenced with a march at 12½ o'clock A. M., towards the telegraph road, whereon we encamped for the rest of the night, and the regiment finally obtained some food, the first for twenty-four hours. The battle was commenced by the enemy by throwing round shot over and sideways of our camp, without hurting anybody. We were marched about 7 o'clock A. M. into a large corn-field, occupying about the centre of the left wing of the army, which was placed in a large semi-circle. On our right was Welfley's, and afterwards some other battery; on our left Hoffman's battery. This position was occupied for some hours, the battle being for that length of time only an artillery engagement. After this time the enemy's cannon having been almost silenced by the well directed fire of our artillery, Gen. Osterhaus ordered two companies to deploy as skirmishers towards the enemy, to which was presently another company added. The men had to pass over a pretty large field, without any shelter before reaching the woods in which the enemy were concealed, which was done in double-quick time, following up the enemy into the timber, there composed of large trees without any undergrowth. The enemy retreated rapidly behind a fence at the other end of the timber from where they poured a destructive fire on us. The balance of the regiment in the meantime coming

up, and the 25th Illinois skirmishing on our right, and the 36th Illinois on our left, we went forward routing the enemy completely before our front, and achieving in connection with the other brave troops on our right and left, a complete and decided victory. This ended the battle as far as I am aware of, at least as far as this regiment is concerned. The officers and men engaged in battle this day numbered less than four hundred, but, I say it with pride, showed themselves worthy of the distinguished commander whose name the regiment bears.

The casualties of this day were three killed and twelve wounded, mostly severely. My horse was killed by a shot in the neck.

The casualties of all three days, were: March 6, 1862, four wounded, two missing; 7th, twelve wounded; 8th, twelve wounded, and three killed; making a loss in all of three killed, twenty-eight wounded, and two missing.

Respectfully submitted.

HUGO WANGELIN,  
Major Com'dg 12th Mo. Vols.

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#### POTEN—17TH INFANTRY MISSOURI VOLUNTEERS.

REPORT OF THE 17TH REG'T MO. VOL'S, 2D BRIG., )  
CAMP, ROSE HILL, March 10, 1862. }

*Wednesday, March 5th.*—In camp at McKreisick's farm, Companies A and C received orders to join an expedition under Maj. Conrad to the Indian Territory.

*Thursday, March 6th.*—On the march to Sugar Creek, halted five miles from Bentonville, when the intelligence reached us that the enemy had attacked our rear guard at Bentonville. Major Poten having been sent to General Curtis to report the state of affairs, leaving Capt. Niegeman in command, the regiment marched back on the road to Bentonville, and covered the retreat of the division. Major Poten having in the meantime returned, and two companies of the 15th Regiment Missouri Volunteers, under Major Landry, having been attached to our regiment, reached camp about dark.

*Friday, March 7th.*—Remained in camp until noon, when General Sigel ordered Major Poten to advance on the road to Bentonville. The command consisted of the 17th Regiment Missouri Volunteers, two companies of the 15th Missouri, Major Landry; two companies of Benton Hussars, Major Heinrichs; two pieces of artillery under Capt. Elbert; and two companies of 3d Missouri, Capt. Hartman; Major Poten commanding the whole. Having advanced about five miles, we discovered the enemy in front of our right wing, on the hills. Our skirmishers had for a while kept up a lively fire, driving the enemy back. The artillery having come forward, fired three shells at them, without, however, receiving any response from the enemy. Major Heinrichs now advanced with his two companies of cavalry close up to the enemy's stand, when they fired at him with three cannon, wounding one of his men severely, on the head, another one slightly.

The object of the expedition having been gained, the order to retreat was given by Major Poten, and carried out with the greatest order. Several prisoners were taken going back to the camp, where the whole train of the division had been left.

*Saturday, March 8th.*—According to orders received from General Sigel, our force, after the arrival of four companies of the 2d Regiment Missouri Volunteers, proceeded along the telegraph road to the battle-field. Posted on the left wing, the regiment deployed as skirmishers, and advanced over the hill in front to the telegraph road, where we received the order to follow the retreating enemy. Marched to within two miles from Keetsville and camped there. In consequence of intelligence received that the enemy was encamped one mile further, the command started again, through Keetsville. After fruitless exertions to catch up with him, the command returned to camp on Sugar Creek, at Rose Hill.

Below a list of our loss since Wednesday, March 5th.

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A. H. POTEN,  
Comdg. 17th Regt. Mo. Vols.

FRED. LERER, Adjutant.

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#### KNOBELSDORFF.

HEADQUARTERS 44TH ILLS. VOL'S, NORTH-WESTERN RIFLE REG'T, }  
CAMP, PEA RIDGE, ARK., March 11, 1862. }

GEN. SIGEL, Comd'g 1st and 2d Divisions:

*Sir*—I have the honor to report the action of this regiment from the 6th to the 9th of March inclusive. The regiment, stationed at Camp Cooper, near Bentonville, received marching orders at 11 o'clock P. M. of the 5th, and at 2 o'clock A. M. of the 6th, commenced a retrograde movement towards Sugar Creek Hollow.

Other marching orders were received. Company F, under command of Lieut. Hickey, was stationed at Williams' Mill, seven miles west, grinding flour for the use of the regiment. A messenger was immediately sent for them, and they made a very rapid march, reaching the regiment in time to march with us, bringing also a quantity of flour. The regiment, with the 1st Division, passed Bentonville at sunrise, and arrived at Sugar Creek Hollow at 11 o'clock A. M. We had hardly stacked our arms before information was received that the 12th Missouri regiment had been cut off by the enemy, and we were ordered by you to hasten back to their assistance, which was immediately done, the regiment going double-quick some six miles, but as the enemy had retreated, we were ordered back and took position on the bluff, west of the Hollow. Contrary to all expectation, the enemy attacked our forces the next morning on the north-west side of our lines, and the battle of Leetown commenced. My regiment, together with the 25th Illinois, 17th Missouri, and part of Welfley's battery were held in reserve until 1 o'clock P. M., when we were all ordered by you to the field and to the rescue. Companies C and A, under command of Captain Russell, were previously ordered to skirmish the woods in front of our position and secure the march of the reserve to the battle-field. Capt. Russell succeeded, by skillful management, in taking many prisoners and driving back scattering bodies of the enemy who threatened our left flank. Eight companies proceeded double-quick to the battle-ground near Leetown. Arriving on the field they



were ordered by Brig. Gen. Davis to take position on the right of the road, where the hardest fighting had been done. A line of skirmishers was immediately thrown out and the regiment followed with great promptness, passing over the dead and wounded who lay in every direction. Finding the enemy were retreating, I followed them rapidly, taking a number of prisoners and keeping up a lively skirmishing fire. After pursuing them over a mile, I took position on a high ridge commanding the surrounding ground. At this moment you arrived with artillery and other forces and ordered us forward in pursuit of the enemy. Night overtaking us, we were ordered into an open field on the left, and slept on our arms in front and near the enemy. Early the next morning, together with other regiments, we changed position and went towards the headquarters of Gen. Curtis, near Pea Ridge. At 7 o'clock on the morning of the 8th, we took position on the left of Col. Carr's regiment, from the north-east. After taking our position and throwing out skirmishers, the enemy commenced a heavy fire on our right flank, forcing Col. Carr's regiment and the two batteries they were supporting, to retire. Part of the infantry broke through our line, but our men behaved with the greatest coolness, and did not fall back until ordered to do so. Gen. Curtis then ordered me to take a new position, supporting the 1st Iowa, and one other battery. The order was obeyed with promptness, and as the batteries advanced the regiment also advanced in line of battle on the open field, exposed to the fire from the enemy's batteries. You ordered me at this instant to the support of Welfley's and Hoffman's batteries, stationed on the open field in front of the high ridge occupied by the enemy, which was done with the greatest alacrity. Having taken this position, companies A, C, G and K, were ordered forward to support our forces, which were then storming the ridges, which was done in the most spirited manner, our companies joining with other regiments in driving the enemy from their strong position, whilst the balance of the regiment followed as a reserve. The enemy having been driven forward, we pursued them some four miles on the road toward Keetsville. Arriving at the junction of the Bentonville road, I was ordered after being joined by two companies of the 36th Illinois regiment and one company of the Benton Hussars, to continue the pursuit of the enemy on the Bentonville road. At 7 o'clock the next morning, I marched toward Bentonville, going within five miles of the place. Having no orders to proceed further, and Col. Ellis' cavalry regiment having overtaken me, I returned to within one mile of the Keetsville road, and the next day joined your command, leaving two companies to guard the road.

Owing to the coolness and discipline of the soldiers, and the fortunate positions which were selected, our loss was very small, being only one man killed, two wounded, and seventeen missing. All, officers and soldiers, behaved with the greatest spirit and courage. I would especially mention the names of Capt. A. A. Barrett, acting major; Capt. J. Russell, Capt. L. M. Sabin, Capt. Max Crone, of the Potomac Army, who volunteered for the occasion; Adj. Jas. S. Ransom, and Lieut. Davis, who displayed great energy and courage.

The regiment has taken in this engagement over one hundred and fifty prisoners, among them one acting brigadier general, one colonel, one major, one chaplain,

three captains, and two lieutenants. They have also captured one stand of colors, two hundred and thirty stand of arms, and sixty horses.

Very respectfully yours,

CHAS. KNOBELSDORFF, Col. Comm'g.

WASHBURN.

HEADQUARTERS EIGHTEENTH REG'T, IND. VOLS, }  
March 8. }

COL. THOS. PATTISON, Comm'g 1st Brig, 3d Div., South-western Army:

In obedience to order No. —, I have the honor to submit the following report of the part taken by the Eighteenth regiment Indiana Volunteers in the recent engagement near Sugar Creek, Arkansas:

On the 6th inst., the regiment under my command was ordered to take possession of one of the high points commanding the approach to Sugar Creek by way of the main Texas road leading through Cross Hollows, and to prepare rifle pits; which we did, working on the same until about 11 o'clock of the 7th, when the firing having opened some two miles in our rear, near the village of Leetown, we were by your orders transferred to the scene of action. On arriving at the point, we were ordered to take position on the left, but had hardly formed our line when we were ordered to change our position to the extreme right of our line, move down to the right half a mile, and endeavor to get in the rear of the enemy's left, who were engaged with the second brigade of our division. On endeavoring to gain our position, we met the 59th Illinois retreating, having been driven back by an overwhelming force. We were delayed a few moments by their running through our lines. As soon as they had passed us we made a left half wheel, and moved forward through a dense growth of timber and underbrush, and soon found ourselves in the rear of the enemy, who were pursuing the 37th Illinois, which was falling back in good order. The first notice they had of our approach was receiving our fire.

The enemy's force, consisting of the 3d Louisiana, two regiments of Arkansas troops, and a regiment of Cherokee Indians, immediately turned upon us, and made a vigorous attack; but having ordered my men to lie down, we received but little damage. The 22d Indiana, which was on my left, gave way in confusion, and the enemy commenced passing around my left to the rear. I immediately faced my regiment by the rear rank, lying close to the ground, and replied to their fire in such a manner as to soon throw them into the utmost confusion. Finding my rear clear, I faced again by the front rank and pressed on, driving the enemy back into the open field, into the fire of the 37th Illinois, which rallied in the woods to our left. The enemy fled in great disorder, leaving the guns of the Peoria light artillery, which they had taken and been using upon us, throwing canister and shell, the effects of which were only avoided by keeping my men close to the ground. We were then ordered to bivouac for the night.

At 12 o'clock we were ordered to move in silence from our station, and take position on the right of the main road, in the thick brush, bordering on a low bottom field. On our right were three pieces of artillery, the 22d Indiana, and the left wing of the 8th Indiana. In this position we lay until seven o'clock in

the morning, when our battery opened upon the woods in our front. After a couple of shots from our battery, we were opened upon by a masked battery not more than two hundred yards in our front. The fire was so hot as to oblige the battery and infantry on our right to retire in some confusion. My regiment, I am happy to say, remained in their position until ordered by you to fall back, while the enemy poured in a perfect storm of shell and grapeshot, and we only avoided a heavy loss by lying down. When ordered to fall back, we formed our line on the hill and awaited orders. Between ten and eleven o'clock, we were ordered to move by our right flank to a position beyond the enemy's left. The 18th being on the extreme right of our whole line, we were ordered to fix bayonets, and to drive back and turn the enemy's flank; which order was obeyed, driving them back in the greatest confusion. Our column was halted, and our men, wearied by charging over hills and hollows, through thick underbrush, were allowed to rest, the enemy having abandoned the field.

I cannot close this report without calling your attention to the coolness and courage displayed by the men and officers of my command; and I am greatly indebted to Maj. D. C. Thomas, who had charge of the right wing, for his coolness and bravery during the whole action, and his prompt action in carrying out all my orders. I am happy to say that Capt. S. W. Short, who had charge of the left wing, discharged his whole duty with promptness and fidelity. Indeed, my commissioned officers on this occasion proved themselves not only brave, but equal to any emergency. Without disparaging the merits of the rest, I mention the names of Capts. J. W. Williams and John C. Jenks, who were thrown under my immediate notice, and I am happy to say that their coolness and bravery, shown on this occasion, cannot be excelled by any. To Dr. G. W. Gordon we are much indebted for the promptness with which he followed the regiment to every part of the field, and the skillful attention he paid to the wounded.

Enclosed please find the report of our dead, wounded, and number engaged.

With great respect, I am your obedient servant,

H. D. WASHBURN,

Lt. Col. Com. 18th Reg't Ind. Vol's.

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SHUNK.

HEADQUARTERS 8TH REGIMENT INDIANA VOLUNTEERS, }  
March 13th, 1862. }

COL. E. A. CARR, Comdg. 4th Division:

SIR—In reply to your note of the 12th inst., I would say, that about 3 o'clock P. M. of the first days of fighting, an order came from Gen. Curtis to Col. Benton, commanding the 8th Indiana, to send five companies to your support. He immediately ordered me to take the left wing of the regiment and proceed in double-quick.

I was joined by three pieces rifled cannon from Capt. Klaus' Indiana Battery, which I reported to you at the same time. You attached my command, temporarily, to Col. Vandever's. Afterwards I received an order to go over on the right of the main road, in the brush, to the support of Col. Dodge, to whom I did not report, from the fact that my guide's horse was killed under him, and I

was soon engaged by about 1200 of the enemy, with whom I continued to fight, along with the 4th Iowa, until dark. We then fell back about 300 yards, across the field in the edge of the timber, and laid on our arms all night. In the morning I was ordered by Col. Pattison, commanding the brigade, to join my brigade, which I did. My loss in the engagement of Friday afternoon was five killed and twenty-seven wounded.

I have the honor to be your very obd't serv't,

DAVID SHUNK,  
Lieut. Col. 8th Ind. Vols.

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#### WELFLEY'S BATTERY.

CAMP PEA RIDGE, March 11th, 1862.

GENERAL—Below I have the honor to hand you a report of the part my battery took in the battle of Pea Ridge. By order from headquarters, I left camp McKreisick, Tuesday, March the 4th, with two howitzers, on an expedition. Thursday night, the 6th inst., I returned, with one piece, to camp Sugar Creek, leaving the other in charge of Lieut. Waizenegge.

On Friday morning, March the 7th, I received marching orders, and left with the command under General Osterhaus, with three howitzers, leaving the two 12-pound guns in command of Lieut. Jacoby, on the ridge looking south. Being ordered to advance, I went forward about half a mile, where, as I was advancing on a small road surrounded by timber, the 3d Iowa Cavalry rushed down upon me in a regular stampede, running several men down. I ordered my pieces left about, which movement was done in good order; but just as I was leaving the timber, one of the horses was shot, and broke the tongue, and it was impossible to take the piece along. As soon as we had formed in line, myself and Lieut. Beneke went forward with two companies of infantry of the 12th Missouri Volunteers, and after considerable labor were able to bring the piece from the brush and into action. We kept up a steady fire on the enemy for about four hours, after which the firing ceased. About dark we followed the main column, and got to camp at 2 o'clock A. M. At 4 o'clock P. M., the two 12-pound guns came out to the field of action, and returned to camp with General Davis' Division.

On Saturday, the 8th inst., at 6 o'clock A. M., the battery being ready, was ordered to the left wing, where I occupied, with all five pieces, the centre of our division. Here my battery suffered most, being exposed to a terrific fire from the enemy. After two hours continuous firing, I ordered the three howitzers to advance, and sent the 12-pound guns to the left, where they occupied a slight elevating ground, and opened a very successful fire on the then retreating forces of the enemy. The three howitzers then went forward and struck the Cassville road near the Elkhorn Tavern. After arriving here I had the honor to pursue the enemy, which I did till 4 o'clock P. M., when the advance guard camped about two miles south of Keetsville. Sunday morning we kept up our advance about two miles north of Keetsville, when I was ordered to return to camp, arriving about 2 o'clock P. M.

Enough praise cannot be given to my officers and men, all of whom behaved with the utmost coolness and bravery. To the 12th Regiment Missouri Volunteers I am indebted for a fine 6-pound brass cannon, which they captured in this advance; and also for rendering me such valuable assistance in recapturing my disabled piece the day before.

My loss during the two days' engagement is comparatively small, considering the heavy fire my battery was mostly exposed to; the third section, in command of Lieut. Beneke, suffered most. I lost one man killed and six wounded.

\* \* \* \* \*

Most respectfully your obd't serv't,

M. WELFLEY,  
Capt. comdg. Artillery.

#### HAYDEN'S DUBUQUE BATTERY.

HEADQUARTERS HAYDEN'S BATTERY, ATTACHED TO THE 9TH IOWA INFANTRY, }  
SUGAR CREEK, March 9, 1862. }

COLONEL:—Herewith please find statements of the part taken by this command in the action of the 7th and 8th insts. :

Pursuant to your order I sent forward one section of the battery in charge of Lieut. McNight, who took position in the road directly in front of and under a heavy fire from the enemy's battery. Lieut. W. H. McClure and J. Bradley with their respective sections. were ordered forward to engage the enemy on the right and left of the first section. Supported by the 9th Iowa Infantry, we held this position until the rebel guns had disabled two pieces and killed and wounded many of both men and horses. The engagement now became general along the whole line, with both artillery and infantry. The enemy's fire becoming too severe we withdrew, leaving behind one disabled limber and several killed and wounded horses. We then took position about three hundred yards in rear of the point where our fire was first opened. Remaining there until near evening, (having held the enemy in check during the entire day,) at which time the whole division fell back to a large open field, where it halted during the night. Here the enemy pursued, but being vigorously engaged by our artillery and infantry, were driven back with severe loss. During the engagement we attempted to plant two pieces of the battery upon a commanding eminence but failed in the endeavor, an immense force of the enemy's infantry charging upon us, carrying away one of my guns and killing and wounding two of my own and several of the battery's horses.

On the morning of the 8th we took position on the enemy's left, unsupported by either infantry or cavalry, opening fire on the slope where our guns were captured the day previous. Shortly afterwards the enemy opened upon us from a battery in our front, to which we then turned our fire, silenced his guns and driving him from the field.

Our loss is two men killed and seventeen wounded. We lost twenty-three horses killed, and three disabled. Three of our own guns and one limber were captured by the enemy.

I desire to make mention of the coolness and bravery of the whole command during the entire engagement, especially of Lieuts. Wright and Bradley, who fearless of all personal danger met the enemy with a spirit worthy of commendation, and cannot overlook the efficient services rendered by Serjts. House, Hawkins and Weaver; alike of Corp'ls Martin, Guilford, Goldthorpe and Roules; the latter while spiking the last gun left on the field, was severely wounded in both legs.

I am, Colonel, respectfully,

M. M. HAYDEN, Commanding.

COL. WM. VANDEVER, Com'dg 2d Brigade, 4th Division.

## CHAPTER TENTH.

### REBEL ACCOUNT OF THE BATTLE OF ELKHORN (PEA RIDGE).

REPORT OF MAJOR GEN. EARL VAN DORN, COMMANDING THE REBEL ARMY.

HEADQUARTERS TRANS-MISSISSIPPI DISTRICT, }  
JACKSONPORT, ARK., March 27, 1862. }

COLONEL: I have the honor to report, that while at Pocahontas I received dispatches on the 22d of February, informing me that Gen. Price had rapidly fallen back from Springfield before a superior force of the enemy, and was endeavoring to form a junction with the division of Gen. McCulloch in Boston Mountains.

For reasons which seemed to me imperative, I resolved to go in person and take command of the combined forces of Price and McCulloch. I reached their headquarters on the 3d of March, and being satisfied that the enemy, who had halted on Sugar Creek, fifty-five miles distant, was only awaiting large reinforcements before he would advance, I resolved to attack him at once. Accordingly I sent for Gen. Pike to join me with the forces under his command, and on the morning of the 4th of March moved, with the divisions of Price and McCulloch, and by way of Fayetteville and Bentonville, to attack the enemy's main camp on Sugar Creek. The whole force under my command was about 16,000.

On the 6th we left Elm Spring for Bentonville, and from prisoners captured by our scouting parties on the 5th, I became convinced that up to that time no suspicion was entertained of our advance, and that there was strong hopes of our effecting a complete surprise, and attacking the enemy before the large detachments encamped at various points in the surrounding country could rejoin the main body. I therefore endeavored to reach Bentonville, eleven miles distant, by a rapid march; but the troops moved so very slowly that it was 11 o'clock A. M. before the head of the leading division (Price's) reached the village, and we had the mortification to see Sigel's division, 7,000 strong, leaving it as we entered. Had we been one hour sooner, we should have cut him off with his whole force, and certainly have beaten the enemy next day.

We followed him, our advance skirmishing with his rear guard, which was admirably handled, until we had gained a point on Sugar Creek, about seven miles beyond Bentonville, and within one or two miles of the strongly intrenched camp of the enemy.

In conference with Gens. McCulloch and McIntosh, who had accurate knowledge of this locality, I had ascertained that by making a detour of eight miles, I could reach the telegraph road leading from Springfield to Fayetteville, and be immediately in rear of the enemy and his intrenchments.

I had resolved to adopt this route, and therefore halted the head of the column near the point where the road by which I proposed to move diverges, threw out my pickets, and bivouacked as if for the night; but soon after dark I marched again, moving with Price's division in advance, and taking the road by which I hoped before daylight to reach the rear of the enemy.

Some obstructions which he had hastily thrown in the way so impeded our march, that we did not gain the telegraph road until near 10 o'clock A. M. of the 7th.

From prisoners with forage wagons whom our cavalry pickets brought in, we were assured that we were not expected in that quarter, and that the promise was fair for a complete surprise.

I at once made dispositions for attack, and directing Gen. Price to move forward cautiously, soon drew the fire of a few skirmishers, who were rapidly reinforced, so that before 11 o'clock we were fairly engaged, the enemy holding very good positions and maintaining a heavy fire of artillery and small arms upon the constantly advancing columns which were being pressed upon him.

I had directed Gen. McCulloch to attack with his forces the enemy's left, and before 10 o'clock it was evident that if his division could advance, or even maintain its ground, I could at once throw forward Price's left, advance his whole line and end the battle. I sent him a dispatch to this effect, but it was never received by him; before it was penned his brave spirit had winged its flight, and one of the most gallant leaders of the Confederacy had fought his last battle.

About 3 o'clock P. M. I received, by aids-de-camp, the intelligence that Generals McCulloch and McIntosh and Col. Herbert were killed, and that the division was without any head. I nevertheless pressed forward with the attack, and at sunset the enemy was flying before our victorious troops at every point in our front, and when night fell we had driven him entirely from the field of battle. Our troops slept upon their arms nearly a mile beyond the point at which he made his last stand, and my headquarters for the night were at Elkhorn Tavern. We had taken during the day seven cannon and about two hundred prisoners.

In the course of the night I ascertained that the ammunition was almost exhausted, and that the officer in charge of the ordnance supplies could not find his wagons, which, with the subsistence train, had been sent to Bentonville. Most of the troops had been without any food since the morning of the 6th, and the artillery horses were beaten out. It was, therefore, with no little anxiety that I awaited the dawn of day. When it came, it revealed to me the enemy, in a new and strong position, offering battle. I made my dispositions at once to accept the gage, and by 8 o'clock the cannonading was as heavy as that of the previous day.

On the side of the enemy, the fire was much better sustained, for, being freed from the attack of my right wing, he could now concentrate his whole artillery. Finding that my right wing was much disorganized, and that the batteries were,

one after another, retiring from the field with every shot expended, I resolved to withdraw the army, and at once placed the ambulances, with all the wounded they would bear, upon the Huntsville road, and a portion of McCulloch's division, which had joined me during the night, in position to follow, while I so disposed of my remaining forces as best to deceive the enemy as to my intention, and to hold him in check while executing it.

About 10 o'clock I gave the order for the column to march, and soon afterwards for the troops engaged to fall back and cover the rear of the army. This was done very steadily. No attempt was made by the enemy to follow us, and we encamped, about 3 o'clock P. M., about ten miles from the field of battle. Some demonstrations were made by his cavalry upon my baggage train and the batteries of artillery, which returned by different routes from that taken by the army; but they were instantly checked, and, thanks to the skill and courage of Col. Stone and Major Wade, all of the baggage and artillery joined the army in safety.

So far as I can ascertain, our losses amount to about six hundred killed and wounded, and two hundred prisoners, and one cannon, which, having become disabled, I ordered to be thrown into a ravine.

The best information I can procure of the enemy's loss, places his killed at more than seven hundred, with at least an equal number wounded. We captured about three hundred prisoners, so that his total loss is near about two thousand. We brought away four cannon and ten baggage wagons, and we burnt upon the field three cannon taken by McIntosh in his brilliant charge. The horses having been killed, these guns could not be brought away.

The force with which I went into action was less than 14,000 men; that of the enemy is variously estimated at from 17,000 to 24,000.

During the whole of this engagement I was with the Missouri Division under Price, and I have never seen better fighters than these Missouri troops, or more gallant leaders than Gen. Price and his officers. From the first to the last shot they continually pushed on and never yielded an inch they had won; and when at last they received the order to fall back, they retired steadily and with cheers. Gen. Price received a severe wound early in the action, but would neither retire from the field nor cease to expose himself to danger.

No successes can repair the loss of the gallant dead who fell on this well-fought field. McCulloch was the first to fall. I had found him in the frequent conferences I had with him, a sagacious, prudent counsellor, and a bolder soldier never died for his country.

McIntosh had been very much distinguished all through the operations which have taken place in this region, and during my advance from Boston Mountain I placed him in command of the cavalry brigade, and in charge of the pickets. He was alert, daring and devoted to his duty. His kindness of disposition, with his reckless bravery, had attached the troops strongly to him, so that after McCulloch fell, had he remained to lead them, all would have been well with my right wing, but after leading a brilliant charge of cavalry, and carrying the enemy's battery, he rushed into the thickest of the fight again at the head of his old regiment, and was shot through the heart. The value of these two officers was proven by the effect of their fall upon the troops. So long as brave deeds



are admired by our people, the names of McCulloch and McIntosh will be remembered and loved.

Gen. Slack, after gallantly maintaining a continued and successful attack, was shot through the body, but I hope his distinguished services will be restored to his country. A noble boy, Churchill Clarke, commanded a battery of artillery, and during the fierce artillery actions of the 7th and 8th, was conspicuous for the daring and skill which he exhibited. He fell at the very close of the action. Col. Rives fell mortally wounded about the same time, and was a great loss to us. On a field where were many gallant gentlemen, I remember him as one of the most energetic and devoted of them all.

To Col. Henry Little, my especial thanks are due for the coolness, skill and devotion with which for two days he and his gallant brigade bore the brunt of the battle. Col. Burbridge, Col. Rosser, Col. Gates, Maj. Lawther, Maj. Wade, Capt. McDonald and Capt. Shammberg, are some of those who attracted my especial attention by their distinguished conduct.

In McCulloch's division the Louisiana regiment under Col. Louis Hebert, and the Arkansas regiment under Col. McRae, are especially mentioned for their good conduct. Maj. Montgomery, Capt. Bradfute, Lieuts. Lamax, Limmil, Dillon and Frank Armstrong, A. A. G., were ever active and soldierly. After their services were no longer required with their own division, they joined my staff, and I am much indebted to them for the efficient aid they gave me during the engagement of the 8th. They are meritorious officers whose value is lost to the service by their not receiving rank more accordant with their merit and experience than they now hold.

Being without my proper staff, I was much gratified by the offer of Col. Shands and Capt. Barret of the Missouri army, of their services as aids. They were of very great assistance to me by the courage and intelligence with which they bore my orders; also, Col. Lewis, of Missouri.

None of the gentlemen of my personal staff, with the exception of Col. Mauray, A. A. G., and Lieut. C. Sullivan, my aid-de-camp, accompanied me from Jacksonport, the others having left on special duty. Col. Mauray was of invaluable service to me, both in preparing for and during the battle. There, as on the other battle-fields where I have served with him, he proved to be a zealous patriot and true soldier. Cool and calm under all circumstances, he was always ready, either with his sword or his pen. His services and Lieut. Sullivan's are distinguished. The latter had his horse killed under him while leading a charge, the order for which he had just delivered.

You will perceive from this report, Colonel, that although I did not, as I hoped, capture or destroy the enemy's army in Western Arkansas, I have inflicted upon it a heavy blow, and compelled him to fall back into Missouri. This he did about the 16th inst.

For further details concerning the action, and for more particular notice of the troops engaged, I refer you to the reports of the subordinate officers which accompany this report.

Very respectfully, sir, your obedient servant,

EARL VAN DORN, Maj. Gen.

Col. W. W. MACKALL, A. A. G.

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